



State of Louisiana

Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "Mike" Foster
Governor

J. Dale Givens
Secretary

LDEQ Executive Summary Legislative Performance Audit

LDEQ's official response to the legislative performance audit is attached to this Executive Summary. The Department's response can also be found in the appendix of the final audit report.

Beginning in 1998, LDEQ undertook a business process reengineering effort that involved the total redesign of our core business processes in order to achieve gains in efficiency and effectiveness. During the same time frame, we began work on a massive project to consolidate all electronic data and paper files into one integrated system. The impetus behind these changes was that our commitments were growing, our resources were shrinking, and we needed a way to proactively manage our workload.

Throughout our efforts, a common theme kept arising: Our commitments far exceed our resources. A prime example is R.S. 30:2012, which requires that LDEQ conduct an inspection of all permitted facilities annually. In the audit report, it was stated that it "...may be unreasonable to expect the department to conduct that many inspections on every permitted facility." We agree with this statement. Despite all our efforts in streamlining and standardizing, it is next to impossible for LDEQ to meet this commitment.

We feel strongly that many of our outstanding issues can be resolved through the addition of manpower. However, LDEQ's manpower resources were reduced by 27 positions in the current fiscal year and are projected to be reduced by an additional 56 positions this upcoming fiscal year. Furthermore, there is commensurate reduction in funding that will inhibit our ability to procure contracts and necessary equipment. Thus, the gap between our resources and commitments will continue to widen. Our efforts to streamline and standardize are now more necessary than ever.

We have accomplished quite a bit since 1998, yet we fully understand that there is still much to do. An important goal of our work to date is to ensure continual improvement. There are many tools we use towards that end. These tools include peer review, quality assurance and control procedures, and internal audits. This performance audit provides additional information for us to consider in our evaluation efforts. Furthermore, it should be noted that the majority of the audit recommendations involve issues of which we are fully aware and are currently addressing.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is firmly committed to continuous improvement and will constantly strive to meet the needs of the citizens of Louisiana. Through the efforts of every employee of this department we have made great strides in effectively protecting the environment of this State. We will continue to do so.